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ABSTRACT

A survey conducted among 460 institutions offering advanced degrees reveals the variation of graduate degrees presently awarded at the master's level and, to some extent, at the doctoral level. The survey identifies 203 different types of master's degrees offered including some offered by only one institution. Institutions surveyed are identified by control (public or private) and by highest degree offered. (JMF)

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SPECIAL REPORT NO. 11

DEGREE DESIGNATIONS AT U.S. GRADUATE SCHOOLS

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EDUCATION & WELFARE
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EDUCATION

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TABLE I

Total Number and Institutional Type
Responding to Survey

Type of Institution	Master's Highest Degree	Ph.D. Highest Degree	Total
Public	139	148	287
Private	86	87	173
	225	235	460

The topic of graduate degree designations is one which has received scant attention in recent years with the exception of a very comprehensive treatment of the subject provided by Stephen H. Spurr in his study, *Academic Degree Structures: Innovative Approaches*.¹ In his work, Spurr noted that the trend of proliferation of nomenclature associated with advanced degrees lends itself to a chaotic situation.

A recommendation to reverse the trend toward proliferation was recently issued by the Council of Graduate Schools. The policy statement² urged graduate schools to limit master's degrees to the M.A. and the M.S. without further designation as the degrees to be awarded for completion of scholarly research and subject teaching oriented Master's programs. Likewise, for the professional degrees, such as the Master of Business Administration, Master of Music, etc., it was recommended that these be the appropriate degrees to be awarded without further specifying the particular field in which graduate study was completed.

In support of this recommendation, the Council recently surveyed 547 established graduate schools to determine the extent of graduate degree proliferation. Responses were received from 460 institutions for an 84 percent response rate (Table I).

Professional degrees such as J.D., M.D., D.D.S., D.V.M. or honorary degrees were not included. Responses were limited to degrees awarded by graduate schools, thus a significant proportion of the graduate degrees awarded in Business were not included.

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1. Stephen H. Spurr, *Academic Degree Structures: Innovative Approaches*, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, Berkeley, California, 213 pp.
2. *The Master's Degree*, Council of Graduate Schools in the U.S., Washington, D.C., 1976, 20 pp.

The results of the survey reinforce and update those from Spurr's earlier study and provide many interesting highlights, not the least of which is the tremendous variation of graduate degrees presently awarded at the Master's level. Overall, the survey identified 203 different types of master's degrees offered by graduate schools. The Master of Science is the most prominent degree offered by institutions, followed very closely by the Master of Arts, the Master of Business Administration and the Master of Education degrees.

Collectively, these four degrees account for the bulk of degrees awarded by institutions, however, of the remaining 199 master's degrees identified in the survey, 124 or 61 percent of the total number are offered by no more than one institution. An illustration of this situation is most evident in the fields of Education and the Social Sciences. In Education there are 159 institutions awarding a Master of specified field such as the Master of Arts in Teaching and Master of Music Education which are most common. In addition, there are 17 degree designations awarded by only one institution.

In terms of proliferation, the same situation holds true for the Social Sciences which enjoys a commanding lead in relation to other areas. In this area there are 255 institutions awarding a Master of specified field with the Master of Public Administration, Master of Social Work, and Master

of Library Science being the most prominent degrees. What is most alarming is that there are also 52 separate degree designations with none being offered by more than one institution.

By institutional type, degree proliferation at the master's level is the least pronounced at private-master's highest offering institutions and most apparent at Public Ph.D. highest degree offering institutions.

At the doctoral degree level, the trend toward proliferation is not as evident. Accounting for 36 degree designa-

tions at this level, the Doctor of Philosophy degree, the Doctor of Arts, and the Doctor of Business Administration are the most common. (Table III).

The results of the survey reveal the persistence of an unwarranted proliferation of graduate degree designations. Many of these were presumably established to provide specificity, however, the question can be raised as to whether the recipients of little used degree titles are placed at a disadvantage since the nature of the program and the standards required are not widely known.

TABLE II
Number of Institutions and Types of Master's Degree Designations
Currently in Use by Disciplinary Field

	PUBLIC MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PUBLIC Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	TOTAL
GENERAL (4)					
Master of Arts	114	62	129	71	376
Master of Science	114	48	145	79	386
Master of Education	69	36	87	28	220
Master of Business Administration	69	30	110	41	250
GRAND TOTAL	366	176	471	219	1,232

OTHER TYPES OF MASTER'S DEGREE DESIGNATIONS

EDUCATION (27)

<i>Master of:</i> Adult and Continuing Education	—	—	1	—	1
Agricultural Education	—	—	2	—	2
Art Education	—	—	3	1	4
Arts in Teaching	18	14	29	17	78
Business Education	4	—	6	—	10
Extension Education	—	—	1	—	1
Food Science	—	—	—	1	1
Health Education	—	—	2	—	2
Health Professions Education	—	—	1	—	1
Home Economics	—	—	3	—	3
Home Economics Education	—	—	1	—	1
Industrial Education	1	—	2	—	3
Music Education	7	3	22	4	36
Music in Education	—	—	1	—	1
Nursing Education	—	—	1	—	1
Nutritional Science	—	—	1	—	1
Occupational Education	—	—	1	—	1
Physical Education	—	—	2	—	2
Professional Studies in Special Education	—	1	—	—	1
Religious Education	—	1	—	1	2
Science Education	—	—	1	—	1
Science Teaching	—	—	1	—	1
Secondary Teaching	—	—	1	—	1
Special Education	1	—	—	—	1
Teaching	—	—	1	—	1
Teaching Arts	—	—	—	1	1
Vocational Education	—	—	1	—	1
TOTAL	31	19	84	25	159

	PUBLIC MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PUBLIC Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	TOTAL
AGRICULTURE (5)					
<i>Master of:</i> Agriculture	—	—	12	—	12
Agricultural Extension	—	—	1	—	1
Agricultural Management and Resource Development	—	—	1	—	1
Forest Resources	—	—	3	—	3
Forestry	—	—	9	—	9
TOTAL	—	—	26	—	26
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (9)					
<i>Master of:</i> Clinical Microbiology	—	—	—	1	1
Environmental Pollution Control	—	—	1	—	1
Environmental Science	—	—	1	1	2
Geotechnology	—	—	1	—	1
Life Sciences	—	—	1	—	1
Natural Sciences	1	—	2	—	3
Plant Protection and Pest Management	—	—	1	—	1
Wildlife Biology	—	—	1	—	1
Wood and Paper Science	—	—	1	—	1
TOTAL	1	—	9	2	12
HEALTH SCIENCES (26)					
<i>Master of:</i> Audiology	—	—	1	—	1
Avian Medicine	—	—	1	—	1
Communication Sciences and Disorders	—	—	1	—	1
Communicative Disorders	—	—	1	—	1
Creative Arts in Therapy	—	—	—	1	1
Dental Science	—	—	1	—	1
Family Therapy	—	—	—	1	1
Health Administration	—	—	2	1	3
Health Care Administration	—	—	1	—	1
Health Science	1	—	2	1	4
Health Services	—	—	1	—	1
Hospital Administration	—	1	—	1	2
Hospital and Health Administration	—	—	1	—	1
Mental Health Evaluation	—	—	—	1	1
Nursing	—	—	9	—	9
Nursing Science	—	—	2	—	2
Occupational Therapy	—	—	2	—	2
Pharmacy	—	—	1	—	1
Physical Therapy	—	—	2	—	2
Preventive Veterinary Medicine	—	—	1	—	1
Public Health	2	—	7	2	11
Rehabilitation Counseling	2	—	1	—	3
Social Psychiatry	—	—	1	—	1
Speech and Audiology	—	—	1	—	1
Speech Pathology	1	—	1	—	2
Speech Pathology and Audiology	—	—	1	1	2
TOTAL	6	1	41	9	57
FINE AND APPLIED ARTS (21)					
<i>Master of:</i> Applied Art	—	—	1	—	1
Architecture	2	1	23	8	34
Architecture in Advanced Studies	—	—	—	1	1
Building Construction	—	—	1	—	1
City Planning	—	—	1	2	3

	PUBLIC MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PUBLIC Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	TOTAL
FINE AND APPLIED ARTS (continued)					
City and Regional Planning	2	—	6	1	9
Community Planning	—	—	2	—	2
Community and Regional Planning	—	—	3	—	3
Fine Arts	6	4	69	22	101
Industrial Design	—	1	1	1	3
Landscape Architecture	1	—	13	—	14
Liturgical Music	—	—	—	1	1
Music	14	10	57	13	94
Musicology	—	—	1	—	1
Music Therapy	—	1	—	—	1
Product Design	—	—	1	—	1
Regional Planning	—	—	4	2	6
Sacred Music	—	—	—	1	1
Urban Design	—	—	1	1	2
Urban Planning	2	—	8	1	11
Urban and Regional Planning	1	1	6	—	8
TOTAL	28	18	198	54	290
HUMANITIES (9)					
Master of: Clinical Pastoral Counseling	—	1	—	—	1
Divinity	—	1	—	2	3
French Studies	—	—	1	—	1
Hispanic Studies	—	—	1	—	1
Humanities	—	1	—	—	1
Missiology	—	1	—	—	1
Religious Studies	—	1	—	1	2
Sacred Theology	—	—	—	1	1
Theology	—	—	—	2	2
TOTAL	—	5	2	6	13
PHYSICAL SCIENCES (8)					
Master of: Basic Science	—	—	1	—	1
Clinical Chemistry	—	—	—	1	1
Combined Sciences	—	—	1	—	1
Gas Technology	—	—	—	1	1
Geophysics	—	—	—	1	1
Materials Science	—	—	1	—	1
Meteorology	—	—	—	1	1
Physics	1	—	—	—	1
TOTAL	1	—	3	4	8
MATHEMATICS (6)					
Master of: Applied Statistics	—	—	1	1	2
Biomathematics	—	—	1	—	1
Computer Science	—	—	1	1	2
Computing Science	—	—	1	—	1
Mathematics	—	—	2	—	2
Statistics	—	—	2	—	2
TOTAL	—	—	8	2	10
ENGINEERING (13)					
Master of: Biological and Agricultural Engineering	—	—	1	—	1
Chemical Engineering	—	—	1	1	2

	PUBLIC MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PUBLIC Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	TOTAL
ENGINEERING (continued)					
Civil Engineering	—	—	1	—	1
Electrical Engineering	—	—	2	—	2
Engineering	2	1	27	6	36
Engineering Administration	—	1	—	—	1
Engineering Management	—	—	—	2	2
Engineering Science	—	—	1	—	1
Engineering Science and Mechanics	—	—	1	—	1
Industrial Engineering	—	—	2	—	2
Mechanical Engineering	—	—	2	1	3
Metallurgical Engineering	—	—	—	1	1
Textile Technology	—	—	1	—	1
TOTAL	2	2	39	11	54

SOCIAL SCIENCES (75)

Master of: Accounting	1	—	8	—	9
Accounting Science	—	—	1	—	1
Administration	—	—	1	—	1
Administration of Justice	—	—	1	—	1
Administrative Science	—	—	1	—	1
Aeronautics and Astronautics	—	—	1	—	1
Behavioral Studies	1	—	—	—	1
Church Administration	—	—	—	1	1
City Management	—	—	1	—	1
Combination Jurisdoctor and MBA	—	—	1	—	1
Communications	—	—	2	—	2
Community Counseling	—	1	—	—	1
Community Planning—Social Work	—	—	1	—	1
Comparative Law	—	—	1	2	3
Correctional Science	—	—	—	1	1
Counseling	—	—	1	—	1
Criminal Justice	—	—	2	—	2
Criminal Justice Administration	1	—	—	—	1
Economics	—	—	1	—	1
Forensic Science	—	—	—	1	1
General Studies	—	—	—	1	1
Human Development	—	—	1	—	1
Industrial and Labor Relations	—	—	—	1	1
Interdisciplinary Studies	—	—	1	—	1
International Business Studies	—	—	1	—	1
International Management	—	1	—	—	1
International Public Policy	—	—	—	1	1
International Studies	—	—	—	1	1
Journalism	—	—	2	—	2
Labor and Industrial Relations	—	—	1	—	1
Law Librarianship	—	—	1	1	2
Laws	—	—	4	3	7
Laws in Taxation	—	—	1	—	1
Liberal Arts	—	—	—	2	2
Liberal Studies	—	—	1	—	1
Librarianship	—	—	2	—	2

	PUBLIC MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE MASTER'S HIGHEST DEGREE	PUBLIC Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	PRIVATE Ph.D. HIGHEST DEGREE	TOTAL
SOCIAL SCIENCES (continued)					
Library Science	5	1	16	3	25
Management	1	—	2	1	4
Management Science	—	—	1	1	2
Marine Affairs	—	—	1	—	1
Marine Law and Science	—	—	1	—	1
Mass Communications	—	—	1	—	1
Medical Jurisprudence	—	—	1	—	1
Museum Practice	—	—	1	—	1
Organizational Development	—	—	1	—	1
Planning	—	—	2	—	2
Policy Science	—	—	1	—	1
Professional Accounting	—	—	5	—	5
Professional Studies	—	1	1	2	4
Psychosocial Science	—	—	1	—	1
Public Accounting	—	—	—	1	1
Public Administration	12	2	47	10	71
Public Affairs	—	—	6	1	7
Public and International Affairs	—	—	1	1	2
Public Policy	—	—	1	—	1
Public Policy Administration	—	—	1	—	1
Public Relations	—	—	—	1	1
Public Service	—	—	—	1	1
Public Service Administration	1	—	—	—	1
Public Works	—	—	1	—	1
Recreation and Park Administration	—	—	1	—	1
Recreation Resources	—	—	1	—	1
Resource Administration	—	—	1	—	1
Social Science	—	1	3	1	5
Social Service	—	—	—	1	1
Social Studies	—	—	1	—	1
Social Welfare	—	—	2	—	2
Social Work	4	2	27	5	38
Sociology	—	—	1	—	1
Speech Communication	—	—	1	—	1
Technology for International Development	—	—	1	—	1
Transportation	—	—	1	—	1
Urban Administration	1	—	—	—	1
Urban Affairs	—	—	1	1	2
Urban Studies	—	—	2	1	3
TOTAL	27	9	173	46	255
GRAND TOTAL	96	54	583	159	892

TABLE III
Number of Institutions and Types of Doctor's Degree Designations
Currently in Use by Disciplinary Field

	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
GENERAL (4)			
Doctor of Philosophy	135	78	213
Doctor of Education	77	28	105
Doctor of Arts	15	8	23
Doctor of Business Administration	11	3	14
GRAND TOTAL	238	117	355
OTHER TYPES OF DOCTOR'S DEGREE DESIGNATIONS			
EDUCATION (2)			
Doctor of: Music Education	3	—	3
Physical Education	—	1	1
TOTAL	3	1	4
HEALTH SCIENCES (4)			
Doctor of: Pharmacy	2	1	3
Public Health	3	1	4
Science in Hygiene	1	—	1
Science in Nursing	1	—	1
TOTAL	7	2	9
FINE AND APPLIED ARTS (5)			
Doctor of: Architecture	1	—	1
Environmental Design ¹	1	—	1
Fine Arts	1	—	1
Music	—	1	1
Musical Arts	22	4	26
TOTAL	25	5	30
HUMANITIES (5)			
Doctor of: Canon Law	—	1	1
Ministry	—	4	4
Modern Languages	—	1	1
Sacred Theology	—	1	1
Theology	—	1	1
TOTAL	—	8	8
ENGINEERING (2)			
Doctor of: Engineering	1	3	4
Engineering Science	9	—	9
TOTAL	10	3	13
AGRICULTURE (1)			
Doctor of: Forestry	1	—	1
TOTAL	1	—	1
SOCIAL SCIENCE (11)			
Doctor of: Business	1	—	1
Comparative Law	—	1	1
Interdisciplinary	1	—	1
Library Science	1	—	1
Professional Studies	—	1	1
Psychology	1	1	2
Public Administration	2	1	3
Science of Law	2	1	3

	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
SOCIAL SCIENCE (continued)			
Social Science	—	1	1
Social Welfare	3	1	4
Social Work	—	2	2
TOTAL	11	9	20
PHYSICAL SCIENCES (1)			
Doctor of: Science	2	3	5
TOTAL	2	3	5
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (1)			
Doctor of: Biological Sciences	1	—	1
TOTAL	1	—	1
GRAND TOTAL	60	31	91

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